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## **ETHNICITY IN DEEPLY DIVIDED SOCIETIES: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF ETHNICITY IN NIGERIAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICS**

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### **Abstract**

The primary aim of every ethnic group in a “deeply divided society” is to dominate and control the political atmosphere of their society or nation. The competition for power and sense of belonging is applicable to every multiethnic society more especially in sub-Saharan Africa. This paper focuses on analyzing the role of ethnicity in the politics of two of Africa’s most multicultural and multilingual states; Nigeria and South Africa. It analyzes how and why ethnicity continues to play a key role in contemporary politics of the two cases. To better grasp the ideas, an examination of the meanings of ethnicity, two varying debate from divergent schools of thoughts on ethnicity and the role of ethnicity in the politics of the two cases was carried out.

**Keywords:** Ethnicity, Ethnic Politics, Divided Societies, Social Constructivist, Primordial Thinking.

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